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RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC//DDI/OEA//
RHHMUNA/USCINCPAC HONOLULU HI//FPA//
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC
RUEKDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC//DB-Z//
RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW 9722
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 5871
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 5963
RUEHGH/AMCONSUL SHANGHAI 0693
RUEHSH/AMCONSUL SHENYANG 4387
RUEHIN/AIT TAIPEI 3364
RUEHGP/AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE 6561
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SUBJECT: SEOUL - PRESS BULLETIN; May 15, 2009

TOP HEADLINES

Chosun Ilbo
Despite Rising Cancer Survival Rates, Life Insurers Still Reluctant
to Sell Insurance Policies to Cancer Survivors

JoongAng Ilbo, Seoul Shinmun, All TVs
Seoul City to Pave Miles of New Bike Lanes in Central Seoul

Dong-a Ilbo, Segye Ilbo
Three Pro-Park Geun-hye Lawmakers Lose Seats

Hankook Ilbo
New Circumstantial Evidence that
Former President Roh's Family Spent the \$1.6 Million Provided
by Taekwang Industrial CEO on Buying a House in the U.S.

Hankyoreh Shinmun
"Job Sharing" in the Netherlands: Part-timers Account
for 40 Percent of the Country's Workforce, But No Discrimination
Exists

DOMESTIC DEVELOPMENTS

According to a senior ROKG official, presidents Lee Myung-bak and
Barack Obama will not discuss the issue of Seoul's troop deployment
to Afghanistan during their upcoming summit in June. The ROKG will
decide on the matter after the summit. (JoongAng)

According to the Federation of Korean Industries, former U.S.
President George W. Bush will visit Seoul in late July to deliver a
speech urging the ratification of the KORUS FTA. (JoongAng, Dong-a,
Hankook, Hankyoreh, Segye, Seoul)

Former U.S. President Bill Clinton will also visit Seoul to discuss
the North Korean nuclear issue with former President Kim Dae-jung on
May 18. (Dong-a)

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

According to the official (North) Korean Central News Agency, North Korea will put the two U.S. journalists they detained March 17 on trial on June 4. The KCNA did not elaborate on the condition and charges of the detained journalists. (All)

Larry Nicksch, a specialist in Asian Affairs at the U.S. Congressional Research Service, speculated in a May 14 interview with Radio Free Asia (RFA) that North Korea will probably force the two U.S. journalists (detained in North Korea) to plead guilty to charges of "illegal entry" and "hostile acts against the North" and then release them. (Dong-a, MBC)

MEDIA ANALYSIS

-North Korea

- U.S. Journalists Held in North Korea

The ROK media gave wide attention to North Korea's state-run Korean Central News Agency's announcement yesterday that Pyongyang will put the two detained U.S. journalists on trial on June 4. The KCNA did not elaborate on the condition and charges of the detained journalists, according to media reports.

Conservative Dong-a Ilbo quoted a local expert: "The (North Korean) court should finish the trial within 25 days after indictment. That

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means the verdict could come the day of the trial or as late as June 7."

Dong-a Ilbo also quoted Larry Nicksch, a specialist in Asian Affairs at the U.S. Congressional Research Service, who mentioned in an interview with Radio Free Asia yesterday the case of Iranian-American journalist Roxana Saberi, who was sentenced to eight years in prison but released Monday (May 11), and speculated that North Korea will probably force the two U.S. journalists to plead guilty to charges of "illegal entry" and "hostile acts against North Korea" and then release them.

- North Korea's Nuclear Issue

Left-leaning Hankyoreh Shinmun replayed a UPI report on a May 12 meeting in Moscow between Special Envoy for the Six-Party Talks Sung Kim and his Russian counterpart Grigory Logvinov in which the two officials agreed on the need to swiftly put the stalled Six-Party Talks back on track, but opposed the idea of pressuring Pyongyang (to return to the Six-Party Talks.)

Conservative Segye Ilbo reported from Washington on May 13 press remarks by State Department Spokesman Ian Kelly that Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and Special Representative for North Korea Policy Stephen Bosworth had an in-depth discussion on May 12 about the "next steps" to resolve the North Korean nuclear issue. According to the Segye Ilbo report, diplomatic circles in Washington believe that the "next steps" being envisioned by the Clinton team are related to bilateral talks between the U.S. and North Korea and that the Obama Administration's North Korea policy will begin to take concrete shape in the process (of seeking bilateral talks with North Korea).

FEATURES

[N. KOREA TO TRY TWO DETAINED US JOURNALISTS JUNE 4](#)
(Dong-a Ilbo, May 15, 2009, Page 2)

By Reporter Shin Suk-ho

North Korea yesterday said it will put two American journalists on trial June 4 whom the North detained March 17. In a short report, the North's state-run Korea Central News Agency (KCNA) said, "The Democratic People's Republic of Korea's Central Court decided to try

the two U.S. journalists June 4 since they are under indictment." Korean American Euna Lee and Chinese American Laura Ling, who work for the San Francisco-based Current TV, will go to court 79 days after being detained March 17. The two (purportedly) were reporting on North Korean escapees near the North's border with China.

Given the North's announcement that the Central Court will try them, the two journalists are expected to face a single trial, on charges of illegal entry and hostile acts against North Korea. Sentencing could come as soon as the day of the trial or a few days later. In South Korea, Choi Eun-seok, a professor at the Institute for Far Eastern Studies at Kyungnam University in Masan, South Gyeongsang Province, said, "North Korea has a double-trial system but the Central Court also has the capacity to hold a single trial." "The court should finish the trial within 25 days after indictment. That means the verdict could come the day of the trial or as late as June 7."

The U.S.-based Radio Free Asia (RFA) reported yesterday that the families of the two detained journalists visited the U.S. State Department in Washington to discuss Lee and Ling's safety. Shortly after the two were detained, Washington began working for their release through the Swedish Embassy in Pyongyang. Since March 30, however, the North has prevented Swedish diplomats from meeting the two detainees.

Larry Nicksch, a specialist in Asian Affairs at the U.S. Congressional Research Service, mentioned in an interview with RFA yesterday the case of Iranian-American journalist Roxana Saberi, who

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was sentenced to eight years in prison but released Monday, granted a stay of execution after three months in prison. Nicksch said North Korea will probably force Lee and Ling to plead guilty to the charges and then release them.

TROOP DISPATCH TO AFGHANISTAN NOT TO BE DISCUSSED AT ROK-U.S. SUMMIT IN JUNE
(JoongAng Ilbo, May 15, 2009, Front Page)

By Reporters Ye Young-joon and Suh Seung-wook

ROKG: "We will make a decision (on troop deployment to Afghanistan) after the ROK-U.S. summit"... taking last year's beef controversy into consideration

With the ROK's troop deployment to Afghanistan emerging as a key issue between the ROK and the U.S. in the lead-up to the June summit in Washington, a high-ranking ROKG official said on May 13, "We will decide on the deployment of ROK troops to Afghanistan after the ROK-U.S. summit in June."

The official, who asked not to be named, added, "During the June summit, the two nations will have only principle discussions on the Afghan issue, with President Lee saying, 'If there is anything we can do regarding aid to Afghanistan, we will do it' and U.S. President Barack Obama responding, 'We appreciate your help.'" He also noted, "Working-level talks are currently under way in this direction."

The official also said, "During the summit, President Lee will explain to President Obama only measures that have already been decided, such as a plan to expand the Provincial Reconstruction Team in Afghanistan, which was approved at a Cabinet meeting in early May." He added, "We will not hasten to decide on 'additional assistance' - whether to provide a large amount of cash for reconstruction efforts in Afghanistan or to send non-combat troops to the war-torn nation. We will make a decision after the (ROK-U.S.) summit in consideration of public opinion." This defies previous speculations that the ROKG may make a final decision on aid to Afghanistan, including a troop dispatch, before the June 16 summit and announce the decision right before or after the summit.

In a May 6 cabinet meeting, the ROKG decided to increase the number

of Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) personnel to 85. The ROKG plans to dispatch work trainers and taekwondo trainers early next year in order to help rebuilding efforts in Afghanistan. Currently, 25 PRT personnel are in Afghanistan to mainly provide medical support.

The ROKG's position is that during the ROK-U.S. summit, it will only deliver the decision (on dispatching more PRT personnel) to the U.S. and will not discuss controversial points until after the summit. An ROKG official said that since last April's ROK-U.S. summit coincided with Seoul's decision to import U.S. beef, things took a turn for the worse, sparking a candlelight vigil and a controversy over renegotiation. The official added that this trial and error will be taken into consideration this time. The official went on to say that the ROK will decide on the issue (of troop deployment to Afghanistan) by taking time after the summit and gathering public opinions.

A Blue House official said that unlike the previous Republican administration, the Obama Administration does not specifically ask its allies to provide aid which includes troop deployments. The official added that U.S. basic policy is that U.S. forces and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) are fully responsible for carrying out combat operations in Afghanistan and Pakistan. The official noted that even if the ROK goes ahead with a military contribution, non-combat forces instead of combat forces will be dispatched to help rebuild the war-ravaged country.

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STANTON